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Page 24

CITY OF BOSTON

First Semi-Annual Report of the Inspectors
of Prisons and Houses of Detention in Suffolk

July 1885

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CITY OF



BOSTON.

FIRST SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

INSPECTORS OF PRISONS AND
HOUSES OF DETENTION

IN

SUFFOLK COUNTY.

JULY, 1885.

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, July 6, 1885.

The Special Committee of the Board of Aldermen appointed to visit the Jail and other houses of detention within the County of Suffolk, and to make the examination and inspection required by law, respectfully submit their first semi-annual report.

JAIL.

The committee visited the institution, June 23, and found it contained one hundred and sixty inmates. The premises were very thoroughly inspected, and found to be in most excellent condition.

The committee arriving unannounced, just before serving dinner, a good opportunity was given to examine the quality and mode of cooking the food. Both were very satisfactory, the bread, in particular, being of exceptional quality.

Many of the inmates were privately questioned, but no complaints were heard as regards treatment or food.

HOUSES OF INDUSTRY AND REFORMATION AND TRUANT-SCHOOL.

These institutions were visited June 27. The number of inmates, as returned on Saturday, June 27, was : —

House of Industry	961
House of Reformation	78
Truant School	149
	<hr/>
Total	1,188

All the able-bodied inmates were found busily employed in various kinds of labor.

The food was plentiful and of excellent quality. No complaints were heard in relation to the food or treatment, and the discipline was excellent.

The new hospital is fast approaching completion, and is a model of convenience, ventilation, and accommodation, and will supply a want long existing. Protection of the institution against fire is a subject which should receive early consideration.

MARCELLA-STREET HOME.

The committee visited this institution June 28, finding eighty-three boys and fifty-three girls, — a total of one hundred and thirty-six inmates.

Everything about the premises displayed the most exquisite neatness and care; the children looking neat and tidy, being well cared for and well accommodated. The retiring superintendent, Mr. W. Preston Wood, is certainly entitled to praise for the very creditable appearance of the home.

LUNATIC HOSPITAL.

This institution was visited June 28, and was found to contain one hundred and three men and one hundred and two women, — a total of two hundred and five patients under treatment.

The comfort of the inmates was found to be as well provided for as was consistent with the overcrowded condition of the institution; prompt measures should be at once adopted for either enlarging the institution, or erecting new buildings at some other place. It would seem almost indispensable in the treatment of the insane that separate buildings should be provided; that the more excited and

incurable should not be obliged to be placed in the same rooms and building with the more mild and ordinary types of the disease. Everything about the hospital was found in perfect order, and the food was of good quality and quantity.

HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

The visit of the committee to this institution was made June 28, at which time the number of prisoners was four hundred and eighty-five, — four hundred and nine males, and seventy-six females.

On examination of the various departments everything was found to be in perfect order, the discipline of the institution excellent, and the food good in quality and sufficient in quantity.

The committee would renew the recommendation made by the inspectors last year, concerning provision for solitary confinement of female prisoners in some place other than the building now used as a hospital.

THOMAS N. HART,
BENJ. F. CUTTER,
WM. J. WELCH,

Committee of Inspectors.

APPENDIX.

SUFFOLK COUNTY JAIL.

BOSTON, June 23, 1885.

To the Inspectors of Prisons in the County of Suffolk:—

GENTLEMEN, — At the date of your last inspection (Dec. 24, 1884) of Suffolk County Jail the number of prisoners remaining in custody was 173
 Males, 148 ; females, 25.
 Total number committed since Dec. 24, 1884, to and including June 23, 1885 1,602
 Males, 1,337 ; females, 265.
 Total number discharged since Dec. 24, 1884, to and including June 23, 1885 1,615
 Males, 1,350 ; females, 265.
 Remaining in custody, June 23, 1885 160
 Males, 135 ; females, 25.

Twenty-six persons have been committed for debt ; there are no debtors now in custody.

June 6, 1885, between 4 and 6 o'clock, A.M., Sing Lee, a prisoner, committed suicide.

Your attention is again called to the condition of the large windows in the jail ; new ones are very much needed.

JOHN B. O'BRIEN,
Sheriff, Keeper of the Jail in Suffolk County.

MARCELLA-STREET HOME.

BOSTON HIGHLANDS, June 30, 1885.

To the Committee on Inspection of Prisons, etc.:—

GENTLEMEN, — The following is a report of the commitments and discharges of neglected children at the Marcella-street Home from Dec. 23, 1884, to June 28, 1885 :—

Number remaining Dec. 23, 1884 :—

Boys, 74 ; Girls, 56 ; total, 130.

Number committed from Dec. 23, 1884, to June 28, 1885, inclusive :—

Boys, 29 ; Girls, 14 ; total, 43.

Number discharged from Dec. 23, 1884, to June 28, 1885 :—

Boys, 20 ; Girls, 17 ; total, 37.

Number remaining June 28, 1885 :—

Boys, 83 ; Girls, 53 ; total, 136.

Terms of commitments : —

Minority	41
10 years	1
9 "	1
	<hr/>
Total	43
	<hr/>

Discharges and cause for the same : —

By order of the Board	35
Died	2
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Total	37
	<hr/>

Whole number remaining : —

Pauper boys	126
" girls	59
Neglected boys	83
" girls	53
	<hr/>
Total	321
	<hr/>

Respectfully submitted,

W. PRESTON WOOD,

Superintendent.

BOSTON LUNATIC HOSPITAL.

BOSTON, June 29, 1885.

*Return of the Boston Lunatic Hospital to the Inspectors of Prisons
and Houses of Detention, for the term ending June 28, 1885.*

Number of patients remaining Dec. 23, 1884, the date of last
inspection : —

Men	97
Women	103
	<hr/>
	200

Number admitted since : —

Men	34
Women	22
	<hr/>
	56

Whole number treated : —

Men	131
Women	125
	<hr/>
	256

Number discharged : —

Men	28
Women	23
	<hr/>
	51

Number remaining June 28, 1885 : —

Men	103
Women	102
	—205

Of those discharged there were : —

Recovered	14
Improved	3
Unimproved	2
Transferred	17
Died	15
	— 51

The seventeen cases transferred were emergency cases, not treated here.

The causes of death were as follows : —

Pneumonia, 3 ; Phthisis, 3 ; Melancholia, 2 ; Mania, 1 ; Senile Dementia, 1 ; General Paralysis, 2 ; Apoplexy, 1 ; Puerperal Fever, 1 ; Erysipelas, 1. Total, 15.

The hospital is overcrowded, like all other hospitals in the State, largely with chronic cases. Unless some means of providing elsewhere for some of our chronic cases is devised, this hospital will be unable to provide for the acute and emergency cases which ought to be sent here. In my last report I recommended that buildings for that purpose be erected at Austin Farm, and the inspectors are referred to that report for a further consideration of the subject.

Very respectfully,

THEO. W. FISHER,
Superintendent.

HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

BOSTON, MASS., June 28, 1885.

To the Inspectors of Prisons and Houses of Detention in the County of Suffolk : —

GENTLEMEN, — The committee visited the institution on the 28th of June, 1885.

The number of prisoners remaining Dec. 23, 1884, was : —

Males, 454 ; females, 57 ; total	511
Committed from Dec. 23, 1884, to June 28, 1885 : —	
Males, 422 ; females, 89 ; total	511
Discharged from Dec. 23, 1884, to June 28, 1885 : —	
Males, 467 ; females, 70 ; total	537
Remaining June 28, 1885 : —	
Males, 409 ; females, 76 ; total	485

MISCELLANEOUS.

Discharged on expiration of sentence	489
Discharged by order of Municipal Court	14
Paid fine and costs	12

REPORT OF INSPECTORS OF PRISONS.

7

Transferred to Taunton Lunatic Hospital	1
Pardoned by Governor	4
Released on probation	8
Furnished surety	3
Transferred to the Reformatory Prison for Males at Concord, Mass.	3
Died	3
	<hr/>
	537
	<hr/>

The health of the inmates of the institution remains about the same as when last reported. Three deaths have occurred during the last six months. Diseases of a violent nature have not visited the institution.

No change has been necessary in the mode of punishment, and the discipline throughout the institution has been as previously reported.

Labor. — The manufacture of clothing is still carried on, and all inmates who are able are constantly employed in the manufacture of the same, and also about the general work of the institution.

The average number of prisoners is about the same as usual.

Respectfully,

M. V. B. BERRY,
Master.

DEER ISLAND INSTITUTIONS.

To the Inspectors of Prisons for Suffolk County: —

GENTLEMEN, — Following is a report of commitments to and discharges from the House of Industry, House of Reformation, and Truant School, from Dec. 26, 1884, to June 27, 1885, inclusive: —

HOUSE OF INDUSTRY.

Remaining Dec. 24, 1884	798
Committed since	4,945
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	5,743
Discharged since	4,782
	<hr/>
Remaining June 27, 1885	961
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Commitments for.

Drunkenness	4,027
Larceny	269
Assault and battery	246
Vagabond	92
Common drunkard	60
Idle and disorderly	48
Common night-walker	38

Breaking glass	31
Disturbing the peace	14
Profanity	14
Remaining on the sidewalk	10
Assault	10
Embezzlement	9
Fornication	9
Malicious injury to real estate	6
Stubborn child	6
Malicious injury to property	4
Malicious mischief	4
Being present at unlawful gaming	4
Unlawful appropriation of a horse	3
Evading payment of car-fare	3
Disturbing an assembly	3
Receiving stolen goods	3
Throwing missiles in the street	3
Attempt at larceny	3
Playing ball on the Lord's Day	3
Threats	2
Allowing team to stand in the street without some one in charge	2
Cruelty to animals	2
Walking on railroad track	2
Using obscene language	2
Forgery	1
Loitering in railroad station	1
Robbery	1
Obtaining money by false pretences	1
Neglecting to support child	1
Assuming to be an officer	1
Lewd, wanton, and lascivious	1
Discharging firearms in the street	1
Keeping a noisy and disorderly house	1
Breaking a street lamp	1
Gaming on the Lord's day	1
Fast driving	1
Abandoning an infant child	1
	<hr/>
	4,945
	<hr/>

Causes for Discharge.

Expired sentence	4,347
Fines paid	386
Pardoned	38
Bailed	5
Died	5
Sent by error and returned to House of Correction	1
	<hr/>
	4,782
	<hr/>

HOUSE OF REFORMATION.

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Remaining Dec. 24, 1884	68	15	83
Committed since	23	4	27
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	91	19	110
Discharged since	29	3	32
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Remaining June 27, 1885	62	16	78
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Commitments for.

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Larceny	11	3	14
Breaking and entering	4	..	4
Stubborn child	4	..	4
Burglary and larceny	3	..	3
Assault and battery	1	..	1
Absentee		1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	23	4	27
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Causes for Discharge.

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Pardoned	28	1	29
Expired sentence . . . . .	..	2	2
Died	1	..	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	29	3	32
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

TRUANT-SCHOOL.

Remaining Dec. 24, 1884	144
Committed since	65
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	209
Discharged since	60
	<hr/>
Remaining June 27, 1885	149
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Commitments for.

Truancy	51
Absenteeism	14
	<hr/>
	65
	<hr/>

Causes for Discharge.

Pardoned	23
Expired sentence	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	37
									<hr/>
									60
									<hr/>

Respectfully submitted,
JOHN C. WHITON,
Supt.

DEER ISLAND, BOSTON HARBOR, June 27, 1885.

